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## Blogger ‘yells’ at Mayor? No polling violations found (/articles/2022/07/12041)

July 27, 2022 by Alan Sloan

A social media political blogger from Farragut, Sean Murphy, allegedly confronted Farragut Mayor Ron Williams at Town Hall “and began yelling at him” Saturday afternoon, July 23, a Knox County Sheriff’s Office report stated.

“Officers responded to (a) Sugarwood Drive (address) ... in reference to a report of a disturbance. Upon arrival, officers contacted Ronald Edward Williams, complainant,” the report stated. “The complainant advised that earlier in the day he had visited the Farragut Town Hall with his wife (T.C. Williams), and was confronted by Sean Murphy, suspect.”

“The suspect pulled his gold-colored van near to the complainant and began yelling at him over political differences, and the complainant’s access to the Town Hall building” in light of the Early Voting period being under way, the report further stated.

Asked to give more detail about the alleged incident to farragutpress on Monday, July 25, Williams submitted the following, saying he and his wife “visited the Farragut Museum — located in Town Hall — earlier in the day, which was opening day of its new 1982 World’s Fair 40th Anniversary exhibit,” adding he’s also “a member of the Museum Committee.”

Exiting Town Hall “and standing on the sidewalk,” Williams stated Murphy “drove toward us, very quickly and very closely. It was almost vehicular assault. While driving toward us, he had his window down and was screaming at me that I was ‘breaking the law.’

“He threw the car in park, jumped out and continued to yell at me, flailing his arms, and said he was going to have me arrested for being in Town Hall during voting hours,” the mayor further stated. “I told him, ‘Go ahead,’ and then (Murphy) got even more upset, yelled at my wife to ‘move out of the way,’ and he went back into Town Hall.”

Williams “advised officers that he and his wife were able to eventually disengage in the verbal contact with the suspect and left the area,” the KCSO report stated, adding the mayor also said “that the suspect has a history of disrupting Open Forum Town meetings.”

Williams stated he was made aware of accusations by Murphy and others who had called Knox County Election Commission administrator Chris Davis, alleging Williams was “breaking the law” by being in Town Hall while early voting — which began Friday, July 15 — has been taking place.

“Chris told me it was just like if the sheriff or county mayor is at the City-County Building — and he said he told them this, too — that it is where (our) offices are located, and I am within my rights to be in the building. It is where I work,” the mayor further stated July 25.

This newspaper repeatedly reached out to Murphy, but no response was received.

Davis addresses issue

Responding to a farragutpress request to clarify what is legally allowed, Davis stated, “Candidates cannot be within a 100-foot boundary of the polling place except to vote.

“The only time I have known of Williams to be in that line was last Tuesday (July 19) when he voted,” he further stated.

“I understand he has an office on the second floor, and I have told him he might want to enter and exit the building in the back to avoid the polling place entirely.”

Davis did confirm one complaint Murphy made that was valid, which regarded an election worker’s car having magnetic “Ron Williams” stickers on it, which the KCEC administrator noted was parked too close to the polling location.

“I talked to the election worker, and it was unintentional on her part,” Davis further stated. “... there was no malice involved ... .”

Williams also stated his wife “was very upset” by the alleged encounter, and stated he conferred with KCSO Capt. Brad Hall about the incident, saying Hall recommended an incident report be filed.

“My wife is still upset, and even had a nightmare about what happened just last night,” he added July 25.

“I plan to talk to my lawyer about what we should do.”



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